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ABSTRACT

Pupils should participate in numerous forms and kinds of writing activities involving poetry and should hear, read, and write different forms and kinds of prose. Types of poetry that pupils can write include couplets, triplets, quatrains, limericks, free verse, haiku, and diamante. The ingredients that all types of poetry might have include onomatopoeia, alliteration, metaphors, and similes. Selected types of prose writing (such as legends, tall tales, biographies, and autobiographies) stress high degrees of creativity. Pupils should also have ample opportunities to write myths, fairy tales, and fables. Learners individually and in small groups should experience writing a variety of kinds of poetry. A reading corner in the classroom should house many trade books on different topics and reading levels. Intrinsic motivation is salient for pupils to engage in enjoyment of literature as well as to write relevant prose. (RS)

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ED 373 321

WRITING IN THE LANGUAGE ARTS

There are numerous purposes involved in writing. First of all, writing can be formal such as writing business letters or writing can be creative such as in writing poetry and prose. I will start the discussion by discussing creativity and creative endeavors in writing. Poetry is a good starting point in creative writing.

Rhymed Verse

There are many forms of rhymed verse. Creativity needs to be expressed within the framework of the desired rhyme. The easiest kind of poetry with rhyme to write is a couplet. With a couplet, there are two lines with ending words rhyming. Notice the following couplet:

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The Dog
The dog was wagging the tail
I thought he was going to fail.

One pupil individually may write the couplet or a pair of learners may write cooperatively. One pupil could present the first line whereas a second learner might give the second line.

A second kind of rhymed poetry to write is the triplet. Here, there are three lines of verse with all ending words rhyming. The following is an example:

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The Cat
The big cat is now sleeping well
He can hear the sound in the shell
Nearby is a large, brass bell.

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I recommend that pupils take classroom situations and use that background information to think of what should go in to a couplet or triplet. What we see around us can certainly provide content to write about. Learners learn in diverse ways in gaining content for a couplet,

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triplet, or other kind of verse. They can gain background information from observing reality in class or in the out - of -doors. I have observed teachers who use illustrations to motivate pupils to write and record ideas. A box containing several illustrations can provide a situation whereby a pupil may choose an illustration in writing a couplet or triplet. Sometimes learners are highly imaginative in writing and do not need the concrete (objects and realia), or the semi- concrete (pictures, audio-visual materials, and drawings) in developing couplets, triplets, or any other kind of written experience. The teacher needs to notice under which conditions pupils learn best. Thus the learning styles of each pupil need to be considered when thinking of and implementing specific learning opportunities.

A third kind of rhymed verse for pupils to write is the quatrain. A quatrain has four lines of poetry with different patterns of rhyme. Lines one and two as well as lines three and four may rhyme, or all four ending words may rhyme of the quatrain. The following is an example of a quatrain:

The Boat
Harbored on the dock
Looking like a sock
Winter has come on
Snow has made it like a pawn.

Here, lines one and two as well as lines three and four rhyme. Again, as is true of most written work, pupils need background information from concrete, semi- concrete, and abstract materials, prior to writing. A motivated writer tends to achieve, grow, and learn. Some pupils learn best in teams and committees, others achieve more optimally working in pairs, whereas some attain best by working individually.

A fascinating kind of poem for pupils to write is the limerick. The teacher should always present models for pupils to emulate. Thus in

reading orally to pupils, a model will be presented in writing limericks. Pupils also should see the kind of poem being emphasized printed on the chalkboard or overhead projector, in teaching- learning situations. Developing and maintaining learner interest in writing is important.
A limerick has five lines with lines one, two, and five rhyming as well as lines three and four rhyming. a limerick then has a couplet with lines three and four as well as a triplet in lines one, two, and five. Proper rhythm and meter is also inherent in the limerick. The following is an example of a limerick:

Toys in the Window
There once were some toys in the window
I ran fast on the street with my head bowed low
The light shown bright above
As I looked up and saw a dove
I fell and stubbed my beautiful doll's large toe.

Pupils should have ample opportunities to read poems silently that are being studied in class. For example, when studying the writing of limereicks, pupils should have ample opportunities to resd numerous limericks. Enjoyment of poetry will be a key factor in securing learner interest in writing diverse kinds of verse.

There are pupils who have a difficult time hearing rhyme in poetry. Perhaps, these pupils should focus more on writing poetry where syllabication is involved. However, all pupils should have opportunities to hear, read, and enjoy different kinds of poetry be it rhymed or unrhymed verse. Haiku poetry stresses so many syllables per line of poetry. Thus in haiku, there are five, seven, and five syllables for each of three lines of poetry. The following is a model for pupils to see and read of haiku poetry:

Snakes
Clever, long, quick, fast
On the ground and in the air

No one sees her then.

I recommend that the teacher write his/ her own poems and read them to pupils as they study the directly related poem, such as Haiku in this case. The teacher's haiku may then be written on the chalkboard and compared with other haiku from a children's anthology of literature.

A variation of the haiku is the tanka. A tanka, like the haiku, has a five, seven, five, sequence in syllables for each of three lines. Two additional lines need adding such as seven syllables for each of two lines. The following is an example of a tanka entitled "The Farm:"

The Farm
Many animals
Produce milk, fiber, and meat
In the large barn yard
Making daily sounds galore
When a glorious life sounds.

A diamante is a fascinating poem for pupils to write individually or within a group. As the name indicates, a diamante is diamond shaped. The following entitle " Ponds" is an example:

Ponds
Hazy,enchantment
Drifting, waffling, washing
Water, body, arm, geometry
Emerging, encircling, dodging
Attractive, beautiful
Lakes.

The diamante above has the following parts:

1. line one is a noun and is the title of the poem.
2. line two has two single word adjectives which describe the noun title.
3. line three has three single word participles ending in "ing"

which modify the noun tile of the poem.

4. line four harmonizes line one "Ponds" with the bottom line of the diamante which is "lakes." Four nouns do the harmonizing.

5. line five has three single word "ing" ending participles which are used as adjectives and modify the word "Lakes."

6. line six has two single word adjectives which also modify "Lakes."

7. line seven has a noun "Lakes" which is contrasted with the title of the diamante "Ponds."

I have had my graduate language arts classes write a diamante involving the class as a whole, involving small groups of three or four students, as well as involving a single learner. Seemingly, these graduate students found excitement in writing diamantes. They were encouraged to read their diamantes orally to pupils taught in the regular classroom. There are numerous variables to observe in writing this kind of poem. Thus learners need to determine nouns, adjectives, participles, and choice of words. Much exploring of word choices is possible through brain storming. There is much delight in an activity here which involves critical and creative thinking.

Another kind of verse needs to be mentioned here in which there is no rhyme needed nor are a certain number of syllables necessary per line. This kind of poetry is free verse. Most of the poetry written by poets is free verse. Free verse is very open ended in that the length of the poem can vary much from one writing to the next. There are several ingredients that all types of poetry might have. These ingredients are the following:

1. onomatopoeia. Here, echoic sounding words are emphasized. Thus words such as "splish," "splash," and "bam" make their very own individual sounds. Pupils may wish to invent their own words that make sounds as is true of reality.

2. alliteration. This ingredient in poetry writing stresses that two or more words in sequence have the same initial sounds such as "Shady shrubs shine in the summer time." The first three words in this sentence

start with the "sh" sound in stressing alliteration.

3. metaphors. Metaphors emphasize a comparison being made in a creative manner such as, "The clouds sway in a lazy way in the sky." Here, clouds sway how? In a lazy way. Literal interpretation is not possible when "clouds sway in a lazy way." The reader needs to be creative in ascertaining what the clouds looked like.

4. similes. With similes, creative comparisons are also made but the wording to do so varies from the metaphor. The words "as" and "like" are used in making this comparison such as in the following sentence: The creek wound like a ribbon through the pasture. The creek equals wound like a ribbon. Here again, literal interpretation is not possible. Rather one's imagination must be used to develop a conclusion as to what the creek must have looked like. However, one can say here that neither literal nor figurative interpretation will provide exactness in terms of what the creek looked like. Sometimes, metaphors and similes provide the best description of natural and social phenomenon.

Collectively, metaphors and similes are called imagery. A creative writer needs to use imagery in diverse kinds of creative writing. Sometimes, imagery too is used in formal writing contexts.

Writing Prose

There are selected delightful types of prose writing which stress high degrees of creativity. Writing legends is a form of creative prose writing. Legends emphasize that a live flesh and blood individual lived, generally in past times. This person was well known and, perhaps, famous. The legends of Davy Crockett are well known to many. A popular song was written on Davy Crockett that remained as a top record for years during the 1960s. He shot flies off peoples' noses from quite a distance away, such as one mile. Numerous legends grew up around the life and times of George Washington. The latter chopped down a cherry tree, according to legends, and was asked who cut that tree down. He was to have said, "I did and I cannot tell a lie." Abraham Lincoln one day helped a pig out of a mud hole at a time when he was

dressed well to go campaigning for a public office. Having grown up on a farm, I understand that a pig becomes very slippery when being wet and can not be pulled out of any hole. Then too, pigs are very strong. If there was a large sow (female pig), the weight would be too heavy for a person to pull out of a mud hole. I do not feel Lincoln"s clothes would smell well after working with a pig in a mud hole. The stench would have bee tremendous. Well any way, so much for examples of legends. A legend could be written about any person actually. Generally, they are written about famous personalities of the past. Unusual traits and characteristics are mentioned about these individuals. Supernatural acts can therefore be attributed to the famous person in the legend. I have observed many pupils with student teacher (ST) and regular teacher guidance write excellent legends. A writing environment needs to exist which assists pupils to be spontaneous and creative. Rigid, formal environments do not encourage creative pupil endeavors. When correct spelling of words, correct punctuation, and correct paragraphing are stressed above that of ideas, a quality legend will not result. Ideas always come first in writing. The mechanics of writing such as correct spelling of words can be emphasized in proofreading of the final product. The mechanics of writing should definitely not overshadow creative ideas developed by learners.

Tall tales can also be written by learners well with teacher guidance. Tall tales should be read orally to pupils prior to being written by the latter. there are worthwhile popular tall tales in literature that learners enjoy hearing. These include the life and times of Paul Bunyan, and Pecos Bill. Generally, a person in a tall tale has never been alive. Tall tales stress imaginary characters and actions. It takes a very creative mind to write novel content, unique to the involved learner. Writing tall tales is no exception. To write a tall tale, the pupil first needs to listen to and read a few of these writings. Ingredients of a tall tale need to be discussed. The following ingredients are and tend to be inherent:

1. the main character gets into some unusual difficulty.
2. he/ she devises ways of getting out of the complex situation.

3. extremely unusual difficulties and means of getting out of these complexities can be written about.

4. originality of ideas is salient when writing a tall tale.

5. usually the characters are imaginary. A question has been raised about Johnny Appleseed. Was he a real, life- like person or was he an imaginary person? If he was an actual entity, writings about Johnny Appleseed would be classifies as a legend. If he was an imaginary person, he would be an individual in a tall tale. If the content surrounding Johnny Appleseed was true and factual, then a biography would be an end result.

Pupils should understand the differences among legends, tall tales, and biographies, as well as autobiographies. Being able to differentiate provides increased options for writing by pupils.

Many pupils enjoy writing about someone's life and times. The writing is then a biography. There are selected excellent biographies in the school library such as those written on George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, and John F. Kennedy, among others. It is sometimes difficult to determine if the authors of the biographies have truly relied upon accurate information. However, the reader needs to appraise what was written in terms of perceived accuracy or lack thereof. Professionals in the field of history also evaluate how accurate the historical content is that is being read. Life consists of critical reading and listening to assess that which appears to be accurate versus that which is not. Again, it is difficult to possess the degree of knowledge which is necessary in the assessing process. But, elementary age pupils must make a beginning here and do the best job possible of critical reading and listening. Reading and listening are both inputs as far as language is concerned. We take in subject matter when we read and when we listen. Outgo of language is emphasized when we speak and write. In the latter cases, the messages go from the speaker or writer to an audience. In the former, content moves from the speaker and writer to the one who takes in the content, such as the reader and the listener.

I would strongly recommend that pupils have ample opportunities to

read biographies and write one of their own based on subject matter read. If the pupil in class knows someone else well enough, he/ she could write a biography pertaining to that person. The contents of the biography covers the life and times of the individual written about. Models for writing come from the teacher reading sections of a biographical book to learners as well as learners reading biographical books to themselves.

An autobiography will be somewhat easier for pupils to wrote as compared to the biography. In the autobiography, pupils write about their own personal life and times. Relevant content needs to be chosen to write about. The audience who hears of the contents desires to know the important and the vital. Repetition and redundancies must be avoided in writing. First drafts, revisions, and rewriting is necessary. The pupil can share the autobiography, as well as other writings, with others if so desired. This, however, should be optional. Many times when selected learners share their written products with others, then shy and reserved learners ultimately wish to share their written products with listeners in the classroom. Written products should never be ridiculed by classmates or others in the school setting. Pupils should always be treated with respect and accepted as human beings having <u>much</u> intrinsic worth. The self concept is vital to develop in whatever the learner is doing in the classroom. On reason pupils do not attain well in school is that they value themselves inadequately. Teachers need to guide pupils to be successful learners and work for optimal achievement. The are no exceptions to these statements when children write autobiographies, among other written products.

Getting back to having pupils write highly creative content, I believe strongly that pupils should have ample opportunities to write myths. Myths attempt to explain the origin of a phenomenon such as the beginning of the universe. The are excellent myths available on how the leopard got its spots and why the bear has a short tail. A creative person or persons is/ are able to describe why in an interesting way. Here again, I would recommend the teacher reading short selections of trade books that contain myths. The teacher needs o explain to learners what

a myth is. Comparisons should be made of accounts such as in the case of the origin of the universe. It is always good if the teacher reads to pupils or photocopies a personally written paper and in this case a myth.This shows to learners that the teacher has written what he/ she expects or desires pupils to write. I feel that pupils too frequently believe that the teacher wants them to write, in this situation a myth. which teachers have never done. If teachers read their writings to learners, the latter will feel that there is an involved purpose. Here, the purpose is to write content in myth form that is different form other forms of written communication. Literature in its divers manifestations needs to be studied and analyzed in order that different cultures and personalities can be understood better. Once pupils are ready for writing, they feel more comfortable with the task. I find to that writing for diverse purposes develops interest within pupils for writing.

All pupils should study and write fairy tales. Many pupils have had a steady diet of fairy tales and enjoyed the inherent content. Grim's Fairy Tales have stood the test of time in supplying interesting literature to children. From this volume, "The Shoemaker and the Elves" has fascinated many, many pupils over the years. Classical content has stood the test of time and space in appealing to the interests and edification of pupils. If the teacher introduces learners to selected trade books at the reading center containing fairy tales, the appetites of these youngsters will be whetted. Pupils then will have an intrinsic desire to read.

One final type of creative writing for pupils emphasizes fables. Aesop's Fables here have stood the test of time and have been pupils for approximately 2,500 years. Many library books containing Aesop's fables contain illustrations. Thus pupils have an easier time reading the content. A fable contains a moral. My favorite fable from the writings of Aesop emphasizes a maid that was carrying milk in a bucket. Instead of carrying the bucket using the hands, the maid balanced the bucket containing milk on the head. The maid began to day dream of how she would become very wealthy. First, she would sell the milk and buy baby chicks to raise. When these chicks became old enough, they would be

sold and more young chicks bought. Continuously, the maid would buy and raise chickens to be sold. Ultimately, she would become very wealthy. As the maid was day dreaming about her wealth, she stumbled over a rock in the soil. She fell and all the milk spilled. The maid had nothing now. The moral of the fable was, "Don't count your chicks before they are hatched." By studying models of fables, pupils notice the ingredients therein and can write their very own. Hopefully, the completed fable will be shared with other classmate.

In Closing

There are numerous purposes and kinds of writing activities for pupils to participate in. There are selected pupils who like to write rhymed verse. This is a form of creative writing. Other pupils may prefer to write poetry containing a certain number of syllables per line. Still others prefer to write free verse where no rhyme or syllabication is needed. A pupils should experience different forms and kinds of poetry. This can be done by listening to the teacher red poems orally to children. Pupils should also read diverse forms of verse to themselves. Within a committee, pupils can read and share poetry in their diverse manifestations. Learners individually and in small groups should experience writing a variety of kinds of poetry. Sometimes, the class as a whole can be involved in writing a poem. Encouraging and supporting pupil reading and writing of poetry is of utmost importance.

There are different forms and kinds of prose that pupils should hear (content red orally by the teacher), read, and write. A reading corner in the classroom should house many tradebooks on different topics and reading levels available to children. Intrinsic motivation is salient for pupils to engage in enjoyment of literature as well as to write relevant prose.